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out of the question. He understands that neither language nor race have much to do with the diffusion of folk-lore, which is a geographical, not a linguistic matter, a result of external contact. As to Mr. Krohn's views with regard to the origin in the north of a cycle of animal tales relating to the fox and bear, it may be remarked that the fact of the existence in that region of more numerous and better versions is by no means conclusive, inasmuch as it often happens that the best variants of a story are preserved in regions remote from its birth. The present reviewer is inclined to believe that the spread of folk-lore follows the currents of culture, and that the north will be found to have been a borrower, not a lender. But this is a difficult question, awaiting the decision of minute and laborious inquiries, similar to the excellent discussions of Mr. Krohn himself.

W. W. N.

POESIE DEI POPOLI SELVAGGI O POCO CIVILI. Saggio di G. RAGUSA-MOLETI. Turin and Palermo : Carlo Clausen. 1891. 8vo, pp. xii., 300.

In this book, Mr. Ragusa-Moleti has presented a collection of the poetry of uncivilized peoples, observing that as far as he knows this is the first attempt of the sort. He divides his work into chapters on lullabies, funeral songs, religious songs, songs of war, songs which accompany labor, songs of slaves, those in praise or derision of the whites, songs accompanying dances, songs of love, of marriage, of animals, various and epic songs. The sources are chiefly from works easily accessible, in some cases of a character rather popular than scientific. For America, the *Journal of American Folk-Lore* has furnished many pieces, including the Chinook songs given by Dr. Boas, and Omaha songs recorded by Miss Fletcher.

It is impossible to imagine any subject more interesting than that of primitive poetry. The great importance and attractiveness of folk-lore, as the key to the history of religion, of ethics, of æsthetics, of psychology in many departments, appears more and more the further such inquiries are pursued. But the time has not yet come for general treatises ; these must be preceded by better special collections and studies. More instruction would be received from a monograph, giving a view of the poetry of one tribe, than from a premature attempt at comparison of the ideas of all tribes. Mr. Ragusa-Moleti does not make such an attempt ; but even as a collection, his book shows the necessary inadequacy and obscurity of an endeavor to group together examples of poetry from races widely separated in culture and character, no one of which is yet understood in regard to its own æsthetic expressions. Particularly inadequate are the chapters on epic poetry and songs relating to the dance ; these offer only imperfect examples which cannot be said to afford any information. It would be better to limit a collection to examples of songs of a lyric cast, and leave dramatic poetry for a separate treatment. It is curious to observe how much of the wildness of early song is obliterated by a double translation, and by the effect of a smooth and melodious Italian form. The question to what degree the sentiment of primitive peoples is different in substance as well as in expression is a complicated one, and scarcely capable of a single answer. Recent discoveries respecting the

poetry and mythology of the Indian tribes of America lead to the conclusion that the poetic ability of uncultivated races has been systematically cally decried.

W. W. N.

TRADITIONS ET SUPERSTITIONS DE LA BOULANGERIE. PAUL SÉBILLOT.  
Paris : Lechevalier, 39, Quai des Grands-Augustins. 1891. Pp. 70.

This curious collection of superstitions relative to bread and to the art of baking is arranged under the heads of the Kneading-trough (*le pétrin*) the Oven, Bakers, and Bread. No attempt is made to discuss the subject, the pamphlet being simply a selection of notes taken from the author's reading. In Berry, it is regarded as profane to sit on an *arche* or kneading-trough, — a piece of furniture which is often beautiful in form and design, as shown by a cut representing one from Provence. A story is told of a thief who entered the window of a house with intent to commit an assassination, but refused to step on the trough still containing dough, on the ground that to do so would be an impiety.

In Brittany, when a housewife begins to knead dough, she makes the sign of the cross with her right hand, the left being placed in the trough ; she goes on in the same way to knead the dough, and after concluding her work shuts the trough (which has a lid), and also the door ; if a cat entered the room, the bread would not rise. It is supposed that certain women can cause the dough to multiply itself ; this they do by using a charm : " By your grace, Saint Alor and Saint Rioual, let it double itself for to-morrow." On the coast of the Channel, the dough is adjured to imitate the leaven, the wheat, the miller, and baker, and to rise. While working at making bread, it is forbidden to sing or whistle. Leaven is supposed to have curative virtues. The bake-oven is a sacred object, and connected with a crowd of superstitions. The oven must be dedicated with ceremonies ; in certain places of Brittany, the wood is watered with blessed water ; the proper heat is attested by the melting of a glass bottle ; at the end of the operation, an egg is broken for luck. Bread must not be cooked on certain days, as on Holy Friday (in Brittany), or during the night of All-Saints, when the ghosts would eat of it. In putting in the dough, no oath must be uttered ; if priests are abused, the bread turns out flat. There is a usage, general in France, that bread before being cut must be marked with the sign of the cross, and in some places the first mouthful of bread, is used to make this sign. The neglect of so marking the bread is supposed to involve misfortune. In Lille, to step on bread is a blameworthy act. It is a common superstition, that the falling of a piece of bread on the buttered side is fatal to luck. It is said that formerly, in Brittany, this belief led to a method of divination, as many pieces of buttered bread were offered at wells as there were persons in a family, and auguries taken from the way they floated.

Of other recent publications of the same author, we can here only give the titles, as follows : —

PAUL SÉBILLOT. LÉGENDES LOCALES DE LA HAUTE-BRETAGNE. Les Margot la Fée. Maisonneuve and Leclerc. 1887. Pp. 25. (Stories of this class of beneficent fairies, supposed to live in *dolmens*, etc.)